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density, though as high as 220 to the square mile, cannot be an over-estimate; it is below the average of the sample areas and much below the 450 found in one of them, which is by no means the densest in the reserve. The geographical features vary from mountains to flat country. The rainfall, which coincides with the hot months, October to March, is very good on the hills. In the flat country to the north it is rather uncertain. The mountains have many springs, but neither of the two main rivers is navigable and there is little life in them. The people do not eat fish and have no river craft, though they speak of a bark canoe (*legugwa*) used in the old days. On the slopes of the hills there are forests and one is of magnificent cycads (Mujaji palms). The people have an intimate knowledge of the names, the qualities, and the uses of the flora. Their dependence upon trees, shrubs, and grasses for food, economic purposes, and medicine is one of the most impressive aspects of their culture. The soil is a reddish, fairly fertile loam. At present there is hardly any game; but in any case the Lovedu were never great hunters, and knowledge of the fauna is now of small use. The temperature is never excessive; the summer rains cool the hot air and the cold winds are easily subdued by bright sunshine. Summer merges into winter and winter overlaps summer; there is no well-marked spring or autumn. The people are agriculturists rather than pastoralists; the few cattle they have and the more numerous goats are not considered so much as food but rather as pivots of social relationship.

The people of the royal group, the nucleus of the tribe, live mostly on the mountains; the valleys and flats are occupied by Shangana-Tonga, recent-comers who are despised by the Sotho, and by the Roka, residents of the flats, looked upon as somewhat inferior though of diverse Sotho ancestry. The nuclear group or Lovedu proper are not numerous. Their group name, *kwevo*, is what we may call the surname of one in every ten people in the reserve. Other *kwevo*, 'brothers' of the Lovedu, rule such tribes as those of Sekhɔpɔ, Mamaila and Rakwadu, but many are scattered among dozens of alien tribes. In the whole Lovedu lowveld the *kwevo* are much less than 10 per cent. of the population.

The non-nuclear groups in the reserve are accretions from outside (if we except the Khigɔa, the Dgɔna and some Lions and Elephants who either were in the country or came with the Lovedu). They have been

and the country mountainous, stationed themselves in a body at a single spot in the valley to which the people were then called. The new arrangements caused confusion and many of those who had collected in their districts dispersed to their homes and never presented themselves for enumeration. In addition, large numbers, as is their habit in the face of European intervention, secreted themselves in the bush. European eye-witnesses estimate that only 33 to 40 per cent, say 36·5 per cent, were actually enumerated, but Natives place the figure as high as 50 per cent. Taking the average of 43·25 per cent, we arrive at a total population for the reserve of $15,238 \times 100 \div 43{\cdot}25$, or 35,232. (3) The number of taxpayers in the Lovedu location, which is about 4,000. On the accepted basis of calculation, the location population would be $4,000 \times 5$, or 20,000—that is 1·72 times that of the census figure of 11,636, and the total for the reserve may be calculated as $15,238 \times 1{\cdot}72$ or 26,209. Finally, averaging the three figures, 36,207, 35,232 and 26,209, we get 32,549 or, to the nearest thousand, 33,000, which is the figure we adopt.

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137 morula tree (*Sclerocarya caffra*), from which such delightful cider is
[272] made. In the distance you hear the hoarse note of a *phalafala* horn, then the shrill ululations of women. They come nearer. You can hear them shout the words, '*Malematsha wee, Malamatsha wee; beli ga dzwala ga*
[533] *dzwala ga fɔlɔja, ga vucla vuphabalemi*' (Malematsha, I Malematsha, the goat I bore, I bore and miscarried, as a goatling I returned)—the praise
431 song of a district in Lovedu. Then at a bend in the road you come upon a picturesque procession: in front walks a man, blower of the horn, followed by twenty women each with a calabash of beer placed in a basket on her head, a gift to the queen from the area of Malematsha. Perspiration runs down their faces; but they do not lose courage, for before they arrive at at their destination they will sit down by the roadside to quench their thirst from one or two of the calabashes they carry. Any one who then happens to pass will beg for a little, and he will not beg in vain.

576 You continue your way. A pigsty and an ash heap mark the approach
[364] to a village. A passer-by, spying a woman about her household duties, shouts her greetings, '*Re fiṭhulelemi*' ('Still our hunger') to which comes the reply, '*Fiṭhulelani zenu*,' a conventional refusal, but equivalent to 'Be hungry nicely' or 'Still your own hunger.' A second woman supplements it with the information, 'We have only just put on the pot.' If the food had been ready or the woman had wished to give the passer-by a tit-bit, the reply would have been, 'Here is food. We are eating.' That one of the ways of greeting should be associated with the begging of food is typical of the Lovedu. Some one returning from a visit to another area is greeted with, 'What are they eating over there,' or 'What are they stinting us of,' and the reply invariably is, 'They are being killed by hunger,' even if there is plenty and you have been royally entertained. There are greetings associated with activities: if you pass a man or woman working in the fields, you say, 'Workers,' and the modest reply is, 'We are hardly working at all'; to a woman carrying wood, you say, '*A di voyi dikhunye*' ('Let the wood return') and the reply is, '*Di voyile*' (It has returned). In fact, learning to greet people politely in the Lovedu language is not at all the simple thing it is in English.

621 At last you find yourself before the village of Raselaka, larger than any
789 of those you have passed on the way and, unlike many of them, surrounded by a thick hedge of thorny *lenɛdwa* bush (*Pterolobium exosum*). At the entrance you trip over a slate-coloured river-stone, jutting out a few inches above ground. This is a charm, laid when the village was built, to keep out the witches; it makes them cool, causing them to forget their evil designs. It is part of a more comprehensive scheme for the
417 protection of the village: the gate posts are of special wood (*khirale* or *modutu*, *Celtis Kraussiana*) smeared with medicines on the day they were
824 set up; round the circumference are medicated pegs (*diphaba*) of *khirale*, the whole being completed by the magic circle drawn by the sister or father's sister, if she is still alive, who drags a 'doctored' branch of thorny *mukhalo* (*Zizyphus mucronata*) round the circumference. If this is not done by her before the doctor begins his work, it must be done subsequently, when the precaution of smearing the soles of her feet with medicine is taken lest by entering she 'opens up a way for witches'. The

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methods of various doctors are not the same. Sometimes a goat is killed and very often one finds at the entrance to a village a stick, 3–4 ft. long, on which are the roots of a *tipigwani* lily (*Hypoxis villosa*) or pieces of skin of the goat that was killed. This 'medicine of the village', some of which is always kept by the owner, is important for curing certain illnesses caused by witches and may be eaten with the firstfruits. Every year the village needs to be 'awakened' (*hu dzosa mutse*) by the renewal of these protective medicines, a process which Rapaka carries out naked at dead of night by sprinkling round the hedge certain medicine, an ingredient of which is river or sea sand. The river sand has the property of making the village appear as an expanse of water before the eyes of the sorcerer, who thereupon concludes that he has come to the wrong place. A village may have no visible hedge, but the invisible, charmed enclosure is never absent.

On passing through the gate you find yourself in the *khɔrɔ*, an open space, in which there is a hearth. Hardly have you seated yourself on one of the sprawling, spider-like stools of forked branches that are ranged around it than Raselaka himself, who has been expecting you, comes forward. He sits down and, inclining his body to the left, claps his hands, saying, '*Ndau dona*' ('Male lion'). He asks after your health, politely inquires about the journey, and pleasantries are exchanged. According to strict etiquette, he ought to have taken his visitors straight to the chief hut, where guests are received, but he knows you wish to be shown over the village, and perhaps that is why he lingers with you in the *khɔrɔ*. A woman passes, bends both knees in a curtsy and inclines the head, passing one palm slowly over the other, a manner of greeting usual to women; then goes slowly on her way. Soon afterwards, you are overpowered by a most offensive smell. You turn round and discover that she has opened up a grain pit, from the roomy interior of which a small boy, who has let himself in through the narrow neck, is handing out dishfuls of brownish-coloured mealies. Dampness has entered and spoilt the mealies, but the process has not gone far enough to make them uneatable. They are called *maduni* and, though the smell may be unpleasant, there are many who, at least as a change of diet, prefer food made of them to that of ordinary mealies. Many people are already inquiring whether the owner is willing to exchange them. Dotted about the *khɔrɔ* are other pits which can be located by means of a stick, for each is covered with a large, flat stone sealed down with mud. The *khɔrɔ* is the place where the men and boys of the village sit, and where cases may be heard; but it is also the playground of the children. Often when children worry their mothers by shouting or playing in the courtyards, they are told, 'Run away and play in the *khɔrɔ*; this is not your playground.' Many villages to-day have no *khɔrɔ*; they are too small to need one or, where there is a much-neglected space for it, it is not used at all, especially when the men are away at work in town.

To the left of the *khɔrɔ* are a small cattle kraal with wire fence, an enclosure for goats, and another with a roof for donkeys. Only a few villages have cattle at all; but, for most of those that have, a kraal outside the village made of rough poles serves now that there is no longer any

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CHAPTER III

BASES OF SUBSISTENCE

The agricultural complex of activities—culture-change adjustments, and problems of malnutrition, education, and division of labour in agriculture—the place in the society, and present-day problems, of animal husbandry—modern threats to the interest in the vegetation as a basis of subsistence.

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THE Lovedu are great agriculturalists and poor pastoralists. They have a vast knowledge of the vegetation, which constitutes the best example of a science among them. It is a science closely related to their everyday lives and upon which they rely, even more than upon their cattle, goats, pigs, and fowls, for their subsistence. They eat the fruits and roots of the plants, depend for their relishes upon leaves and soft stems, and in dozens of other ways nourish themselves upon the natural products of the soil. Not agriculture and animal husbandry alone, but these, together with wild fruits, woods, and other products of nature, are the bases of subsistence.

These bases are all fundamental, but they have different value in different aspects of the culture. Agriculture is most important as a source of the substantial foods; natural fruits provide relishes and variety, and as a means of nutrition are much more prominent than domestic animals. Cattle and goats are primarily not food at all; their great role lies in supporting the social structure. In considering the sources of the primary needs of man, we should get a wholly distorted picture if we omitted the natural vegetation, the use of which as food, in economic pursuits, and in medicine is one of the most impressive features of Lovedu culture. Tillage and animal husbandry presume an extensive practical knowledge of soils, crops, and grasses; but this body of knowledge takes second place beside the imposing science at the basis of handicrafts, natural foods—indeed, the whole medical, nutritional, and economic structure of the society.

008 Nature is not merely a physical fact; it is a living reality, an integral part of the culture. Environment is not something apart from man and his needs; it is the medium in which he lives and breathes. And it is their direct reliance on nature that makes the Lovedu so strikingly different from us, just as their everyday knowledge of the names, qualities, and uses of trees, bushes, and all kinds of plants so greatly overshadows the corresponding knowledge of ordinary men among us. We, who live in a world in which nature satisfies our primary needs in a roundabout manner, cannot easily realize how different conditions are in a world where the satisfaction is direct. We are often inclined to picture primitive man as engrossed in ritual pageant unrelated to, and unserviceable for, the major ends of human existence. It is very necessary to correct this view. It is often thought that sex, magic, and witchcraft absorb most of the time, activities, and interests of primitive man. But, at all events among the Lovedu, more time and energy is spent, more interest centred,

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iend, they return the compliment by giving you a goat; it is the 'walking-ick' of the old women who brought the beer to her son-in-law, enabling er to go home safely. Goats are dedicated to the gods more frequently an any other animals. A goat is killed at a burial, and its unsalted flesh eaten. People pay goats to their doctors; they exchange them for ealies. Their skins are still used for making skirts for women and adles for their babies, whereas cattle hides have no use except for the ongs used in inspanning cattle. Goat's milk, which is never drunk by dults because of its unpleasant odour, is the food of herdboys and girls. ll in all, goats play a not inconsiderable part in economic and goodwill xchanges, in legal adjustments, in ritual and religion.

By contrast, sheep, though in the bones of a diviner they represent the en of consequence and goats merely ordinary people, are of no import-ice whatever. They are very rarely seen on the hills and difficulties onnected with dipping have reduced them to a negligible number in the lleys. Fowls are conspicuous everywhere, but only their meat, not eir eggs, are eaten. They have recently been introduced by the hangana-Tonga and even to-day, if found in the capital, are killed and rown over the hedge. They are never, as among the Shangana-Tonga, ed in religious rites. Donkeys, introduced in considerable numbers me thirty years ago, are used in ploughing and for transport, while pigs, so a recent acquisition, figure largely in trading transactions. Pork is t eaten except by men who have worked among Europeans, but the ason is that it nauseates, not so much that it is related to the totem of e tribe. Finally, hunting, as it is to-day, can be dismissed with a ference to the activities of herdboys, who shoot birds with wooden-aded arrows, use birdlime obtained from certain trees, and set various nds of traps to catch rats, dwarf mongooses, and squirrels.

It is a different matter when we turn to the exploitation of the vegeta-n. The role that this source of subsistence plays is evident in a ousand ways. It is indeed difficult to give an adequate picture of the anner in which the vegetation enters into all aspects of life and culture. rhaps, by way of illustration, we may take half a dozen names in order om an alphabetical list of over 500 plants—a small proportion of the ra—which we collected, and note merely a few of the ordinary, well-own uses:

Muvidividi (*Ekebergia capensis*). The wood, which is very white and nce much liked, is used for making spoons and bowls; being soft wood, it also used for milk pails and door boards. To ensure that it will resist evils to some extent, it is not cut when very young.

Muvidisa-vyalwa (*Trichodesma zeylanicum*). In winter, when beer is w to ferment, the leaves are put into the pot to accelerate the process. e roots, chewed or crushed, are put on wounds to relieve the pain and heal.

Muvilo (*Vangueria fœtidunda*). Two varieties are distinguished. The imary use is medical and magical, e.g. a branch, first presented to termites d then medicated, is beaten on the temples for migraine; a medicated pole *muvilo* is placed across gate entrances to keep out witches. For the ter reason, this wood may not be used as firewood; it would reveal the

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824 protective medicines (*diphaba*) of the village. The fruits are eaten by herd-boys, January to March. The first appearance of its flowers (October) indicates the time when chickens must not be hatched or bought, because of the danger of sand fleas (*madzidzi*). There are, incidentally, many other plants which indicate the approach of the seasons or the correct time for certain activities, e.g. when *musoso* (*Terminalia serecea*) blossoms, edible termites get their wings and children go out to catch them.

[262] *Muvizi* (*Colocasia antiquorum*). Planted at home—in the old days also in river gardens—to provide relish from August to November. The leaves take only a few minutes to cook, compared with an hour or more for many other relishes. The bulb is cooked separately, like sweet potatoes.

[262] [283] *Muvobyani* (*Lanna edulis*). A soft wood used for milk pails and bowls. The fruit, which is eaten by children and adults, ripens in November-December. The wood is not suitable for hut rafters, as it is attacked by weevils, but the bark serves as a rough, unworked string for tying together the poles of such structures as pig pens. Water in which the leaves are crushed is used as an eye lotion.

[262 731] *Muvola* (*Parinarium curatellifolium*). The fruit, called *grysappel* (grey apple) in Afrikaans, is liked and of very great value in times of starvation. It is said to have saved the people in the years 1894–6, when drought, locusts, and cattle diseases overwhelmed the country. At such times the fruit is prepared, like *morula*, in the form of a cider (*vureba*), which is yellowish and sweet. It also has economic uses.

824 262 We have in our list over a hundred different kinds of wild edible fruits and berries, many of them, it is true, eaten chiefly by herdboys. But numerous wild fruits are relished by adults, such as wild figs (of which there are seven different kinds), *muukhoma* (*Burchemia discolor*), of which a tasty, if heavy, cake is made, *mudomma* (*Diospyros mespiliformis*), *mufazwa* (*Pouzolzia hypoleuca*), *munnthu* (*Syzygium cordatum*), *mutbe* (*Anona senegalensis*), and many others. The *morula* is, as we have seen, an important national beverage with valuable anti-scorbutic properties. There are also wild bananas (*muvoa*), long ago brought from the north, but now practically eradicated by animals. Not much reliance is placed upon cultivated fruits, but there are oranges, some pawpaws, and mangoes, planted by the early Christians; these have not subsequently been added to to any extent and they are very much neglected.

For relishes, without which porridge cannot be eaten, people rely largely upon nature. Apart from the leaves of pumpkins and beans, which are available from February to June, they use a great variety of wild spinaches, chief among which are blackjack (*Bidens pilosa*), *mufye* (*Solanum nigrum*), and *thetbe* (*Amoranthus Thunbergi*). In our list we have forty-five greens or relishes. But not only plants provide relishes. In September and in the winter months, when greens are scarce, *mahoru* (*Macrotermes bellicositermes Swaziae*), fatty black male termites, are a great standby. The female of the same species (*dimnfwa*), which swarm from December to March, the rainy season, are so important in the national diet that they must be ritually 'bitten' (*hu huma*) and sent to the queen from every district. They are roasted, winnowed, and eaten as

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relish, the winnowing being mixed with salt and pressed into a cake used as spinach or eaten alone. Children eat *dinnɲwa makhura* (flying ants) and grasshoppers; *maida*, a large red grasshopper and a few other kinds of grasshoppers, as well as swarming locusts, form part of the diet of adults. Indeed, during a famine in the 1850's, Mujaji, it is said, sent locusts, not to plague, but to succour her subjects, the Shangana-Ṭonga. Honey—not only of the honey bee but also of other insects, such as the *muga*—adds, though only occasionally, to the variety of the foods directly supplied by nature.

For nutritional purposes, a considerable body of knowledge of the vegetation is necessary. This body of knowledge expands to a veritable science when we consider its application to the arts and crafts. It is used continuously in all daily activities, such as building, fencing, renewing hoe handles, yokes, and storehouses, extracting oil or fat, and so on. In the old days it was not merely woodwork that was important; iron-making was one of the great industries. To-day, though many implements of Native ironwork are still to be found, the industry has disappeared, partly because the sources of the ore have been appropriated by Europeans and partly because of the cheapness of European-made iron objects. The smith was a specialist, but also an agriculturist and a student of the vegetation. In his industry he used, not only special ores, but also special woods. Similarly, for each of the crafts—hut-building, fencing, making stamping blocks, sledges, hoe handles, milk pails, spoons, platters, winnowing baskets, drums, and many others—different qualities in the wood are regarded as important. There are half a dozen different kinds of plants that yield fibre from which string can be made, each involving a somewhat different process. The value of certain grasses for thatching and making mats, baskets, and beer-sieves is ritualized in the taboo on cutting grass before the queen eats the first fruits; i.e. thatching grass must be left untouched until it is quite ripe in May and June. The elaborate working up of skin, though now restricted to the purpose of making skin cradles and a few women's skirts, involves considerable skill as well as knowledge of the value of oils and repellents to drive off destructive insects and even dogs. Pottery is still a live industry involving a knowledge of the qualities of clays, and what we call 'herbalism', the use of the medicinal qualities of plants, is not confined to doctors, but is to a large extent common knowledge.

A whole volume could be written on the interest of the average man or woman in the flora alone. He knows a great deal about almost every plant. Even a herdboy, as we found in discussing our list of names of plants, could mention one or two practical uses of more than half of them. Young men could add several medical or magical uses, while old men could bring the names into relation with a bewildering number of ritual, religious, and other occasions, and many had specialized knowledge, according to the nature of their occupations or interests. Speaking generally, and in terms of what is commonly known, we find that of the 500 plants we have listed, 200 have mainly economic uses. They are daily applied to such activities as building huts, thatching, making spoons. Some 20 are specially useful for making string; another 20 for

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824 manufacturing baskets, sieves and mats; and still another 25 in the hunting activities of boys (arrows, bows, traps, glue.) Over 100 are known more particularly for their edible fruits or roots and 45 are greens or relishes; 230 are well-known in the everyday medical pharmacopœia, and of these 60 are magical. Among other well-known uses are those of the grasses and sedges (15) from which dancing or initiation costumes are made and those (12) connected with games. Some 5 were considered noxious weeds and 8 had certain taboos attached to them. Plants with conspicuous flowers are not specially observed, and one asks the ordinary man in vain as to the name and uses of the more delicate flowering plants; on the whole, he is far better acquainted with trees than with shrubs and grasses, unless used as relishes.

824 789 What is striking is that the ordinary man regards the flora from a most practical point of view. Only a small proportion of the well-known plants have uses which are mainly magical, and knowledge based upon empirical observation overshadows that derived from mystical conceptions. One does not 'doctor' wood to strengthen it against the attacks of termites or woodborers; one selects the proper tree. In 90 out of 100 cases the quality of the wood, not any magical manipulation, is important for the purpose to which it is put, especially if the purpose is economic; and it is in this sense that empirical knowledge is highly developed. Even in the medical 824 757 sphere, which is predominantly magical, the ordinary man places his faith in the observed action of the herb he uses. The cure may be merely violent internal disturbances, which, in view of the supposed nature of the illness, may be regarded as necessary. The use is not for that reason [753] magical. Many diseases are conceived to have their seat in the stomach; they are to be thrown out by a purgative; and for them purgatives are [755] used with a vengeance. Among doctors, of course, all sorts of magical remedies are added; but that is the sphere of the specialist. The ordinary man uses remedies of which the visible effects are empirically related to the disturbances which he conceives to be the causes of the disease.

824 192 From close observation of the qualities of plants, the Lovedu have arrived at some classification of the flora. They recognize the similarity of plants of the same genus and, if external likeness is a matter of practical interest, there is often a similarity of the word used to designate the various species of the genus. This does not mean that they proceed upon genetic principles; to anatomical similarities in flowers, for instance, they are quite indifferent. If the qualities of two plants of the same genus are to their way of thinking significantly similar, the plants might receive names that are similar; if the qualities are dissimilar, they often know that the two plants are related, though they have different names. The same species modified in its external features by different environments is often given the same name. Species of the same genus are likewise sometimes distinguished by qualifications of the generic name. *Khiphadwa* of the plateau (*kha naha*) is, for instance, *Gymnosporia senegalensis*; *Khiphadwa* of stony places (*kha makhwarem*) is *Gymnosporia buxifolia*. Again, *muduvo*, *muduvatsi*, *muduvatisibi*, and *muduvolisiga*, all containing the root *dud-*, are all species of *Combretum*. On the other hand, *mugavi*, *mukwidi*, and *muhakula thudu* are also species of *Combretum*, but there are

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good reasons for the different names; the anatomical similarities are known, but the uses and other aspects are more important and determine the name. Anatomical differences, clearly recognized, do not stand in the way of designating very different epiphytic plants which secrete 'birdlime' (*vulebo*) by the one name, *khilebo*. What determines nomenclature are not only striking physical features, such as peculiar leaves and seeds, but also a significant relationship with natural phenomena or, most usually, an important use. The variety of unconnected principles used upsets the symmetry, from our point of view, of the classification. But it must not lead us to think that there has been no close observation of the forms and venation of leaves, the taste and smell of the wood, and so on. The details of the flower, except for colour, general shape and size, are regarded as unimportant for purposes of identification. Yet they can name the poorest specimens and wonder why we want flowers and fruit before we can name a plant. The use of many cross classifications is not a burden to the memory, because the names link the plants to their practical uses.

The subject is much too large for adequate treatment here. Yet a few examples, illustrating the general outlook, might be of value. Because of its broad, flat leaves, *Inulata glomerata* is called *xivi ya dou* (the ear of an elephant). The flower of *Wormskioldia longipedunculata*, which is small and crimson and peers through the grass, suggests the name *leiʒ la dau* (the eye of a lion). The baobab is *khivuyu*, something inordinately fat and squat; the root *vu-* also occurs in the names of those fat caterpillars that attack mealies, of the hippopotamus, and of the enormous termite queen. Apt as well as picturesque are such names as *khivedz kha muri* (the liver of the tree), for all fungi; *leada la khithii* (the egg of the sunbird), for a variety of the groundnut; *Voandzeia subterranea*, *moykhakhilemo* (scent of spring) for *Phyllanthus reticulatus*, the flowers of which fragrantly herald the spring, and many others. One might think that those who named the plants were poets. Perhaps they were, because there is no lack of exquisite poetry in the beautiful praise songs that are the real literature of the people.

But their interests are many-sided and they do not scorn to have more mundane names. Here are a few that bear upon economic uses. For weaving (*ku loka*) baskets they use the *muloka* plant, *Acacia ataxacantha*; *mutedz-muloka-phofo*, our *Sida cordifolia*, is pliable (*ku leda*), like other *mutedz* plants, all of which are of the genus *Triumfetta*, and for that reason specially suitable for weaving beer sieves (*ku loka phofo*). *Mukhafisa*, our *Indigofera eriocarpa*, is their herdboys' milk-curdler (*ku khafisa*, to cause milk to curdle). The sap of *mulanzhe*, which we call *Asclepias stellifera*, they use to repel flies (*ku ila nzhe*) from the open wounds of cattle. With the branches of *Uanzanza-ea-a khofa*, a stinging weed which we appropriately dignify with the name *Achyranthus aspera*, youngsters (*vanzanza*) playfully fight one another.

Consider also, lest we think that the genius for giving apt names has been lost, the following few recently introduced plants. The pineapple, because of its prickly, xerophytic bracts, gets the same name as the aloes, *khiguni*. The scent of the khaki weed calls to mind hemp, *bofa*, and so is

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824 192 called the small hemp, *khibajahajani*. The large pods of *legwani*, a peanut of the *masaintiha* variety, are likened to leggings, for which they use a corruption of the Afrikaans word *kamasters*. *Khithawe-mini* in scientific nomenclature is *Amaranthus spinosus* but, for all that, it pricks the 'missus' (*hu thawa mini*). We link the sunflower with the sun, but they call it *mavuvutshokhuku*, fattener of the fowls, because the unaccountable European, instead of leaving fowls to their own devices, fattens them (*hu vuvutsha*) with its seeds. It would be tedious to give more of these interesting names. Suffice it to say that, upon whatever principle they are given, they furnish examples of close observation, of humour and poetry, and of practical sense.

824 461 In the command that the Lovedu have over the material supplied by vegetation, knowledge of the suitability of the plant to be used is by far the most impressive aspect. By contrast, preparation of the material, by seasoning or otherwise, and skilful or artistic manipulation to produce the required result lag far behind. Utility rather than artistic beauty is the main consideration; a carelessly made article, generally speaking, serves its purpose as well as one well executed. There is not much specialization and a high standard of workmanship is not aimed at; most men know what wood to select and how to make a great variety of ordinary household articles. Special skill is needed for making wooden dishes, drums, and milk pails. The most skilled work is perhaps the making of baskets (*zwirushwana*), which is done by men. This is not the place to describe the technique of the arts and crafts; all we need insist upon is the widespread knowledge of the virtues and defects of the plants that can be used.

824 178 Modern conditions have brought about a serious decline in craftsmanship and in familiarity with the vegetation. Schoolboys no longer have the extensive opportunities of learning veld-lore which herding provided. Herding is to them hardly an institutionalized induction into nature study; instead of being a part of life itself, it assumes the aspect of distasteful labour. The introduction of European articles also lessens the interest in the qualities of the vegetation. Yet these influences are in their infancy. They have made some impression upon the material elements of the culture, but they have tended to impoverish rather than to replace the old. You see petrol tins side by side with water pots, ugly sacks ousting the picturesque granaries, patched pieces of boxwood replacing reed doors, cast-off European clothes instead of graceful coverings of skin, machine-made blankets beside hand-woven grass mats, and axes and knives, no longer from the smithy, but only from the stores.

178 313 More serious is the threat to the traditional outlook. Christianity stresses the virtue of being different from the pagan, but the status of Europeanized Natives is precarious both in and outside the tribe, and there is no co-ordinated view of life that can successfully combat the subtle economic onslaught of European culture. And, since 1938, the legislative prohibition of cutting down trees, except after permission having been obtained and a fee paid, threatens a change of which the results cannot be foreseen. Many trees, and among them some essential for the crafts, may not be cut down at all. The inconvenience of walking

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morning assaulted him, but was worsted; the offender then reported his wound at the capital. A *leharula* was sent to collect the blood fine from the district head, but, not finding him, left a message summoning him to the *khɔrɔ*. There the case was discussed with only initiates of the *gomana* present. The men could not decide upon their course of action. They said, 'Let no one be angry. The district head did right, but we cannot carry out the law of the "school" (the man who reveals the *digɔma* secrets must die). We cannot even impose a fine; no one knows what the fine should be. Let the matter rest.'

Khashani, working on a European farm, called his wife, whose baby was ill, to come to him. The baby died and Khashani, seeing 'medicine' on the fireplace, suspected and severely beat his sister's daughter as well as his sister. The case came to the *khɔrɔ* of the queen, which pointed out that if, as Khashani thought, his sister was a witch, he also probably was one. This did not satisfy Khashani, but his sister demanded back her cattle, and the *khɔrɔ*, attempting to isolate the struggle, said, 'We are discussing the "blood". You, Khashani, must pay your sister one head of cattle.' Khashani replied, 'That I agree to do. I shall even drive away my wife, so that I can return my sister's cattle.' The *khɔrɔ* was not much perturbed, since it thought that Khashani's threat was either bluff or the raving of a madman.

In the last case it was the victim, not the queen, who was awarded the head of cattle. The argument sometimes used by Lovedu men against such an award is better known in other tribes: it is that, if the victim is benefited, all he need do to become rich is to provoke others to fight him. And the theory held by those advancing this argument is that to spill blood is 'to break the queen's calabash', and therefore 'blood' cases must be submitted to the *khɔrɔ*. This is the view gaining ground, so that *maharula*, going to collect the blood fine, become messengers summoning the parties to the queen's *khɔrɔ*, without, however, ignoring the position of the district heads. The whole procedure is in a state of flux, but we can see in outline how the blood feud has gradually receded as the kin groups become submerged by the district organization and how, as a consequence, the procedure of reconciliation gained so firm a hold that it maintains its stand against the forces making for centralization.

Not long ago the procedure appropriate to cases of witchcraft and sorcery was the ordeal (*murɔ*); and though the *murɔ* has given way in Vulovedu to smelling out by the diviner (*nuŋgoma*), it can still be seen further east among the Phalaborwa. The test takes various forms; drinking poison, usually an extract of *nwanaxa* (*Datura stramonium*), licking a medicated stick or a heated hoe, removing a stone from boiling water, floating the kernels of *mupani* (*Oncoba spinosa*) in water and observing whether they separate or come together, sometimes accompanied by an oath or followed by the washing of hands or the squirting of water (*ku phasa*). All these are well-known in the lowveld, though the Lovedu used only or chiefly the first; but on the highveld, where witchcraft and sorcery are treated as private matters, there is no legal but only a magical method of dealing with them: the evil is sent back by a doctor privately employed by the victim. The Lovedu no longer rely upon the *murɔ*,

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769 782 825 Offerings may be poured on the ground or on *thugula* objects. Sometimes, however, the ancestors desire a shrine or a dedicated animal. The queen herself and some others have dedicated cattle, male or female, according to the spirit represented; a few families have sheep, while the majority have goats. Fowls are neither dedicated nor killed for the gods. But we have one instance of a dedicated snake, that in the Relela family, to which in 1939, at their burial grounds in the depths of the forest, libations were offered when the *vyali* initiation began in that district; the conception is wholly alien to the Lovedu, though the Relela have been so long linked with, as to be indistinguishable from, them; and the snake, said to whistle, is described as like that dreaded monster, the 'mountain snake' which is often thought of as a mamba but strikes terror like the omen it is. The use of these different animals is traditional in, and bears no relation to the wealth of, the families concerned; some have a dedicated animal, others merely a shrine, while many have both. The dedicated animal receives the name of an ancestor, father or grandfather in the case of the head of the lineage, or of any complaining spirit that has demanded such *thugula*, and it is believed that his spirit (*muya*) has entered into it. Some dedicated animals are credited with abnormal powers: Mamujaji's agitation one day, while being driven to the dip, correctly presaged unpleasantness with the dip inspector; Malegudu is the fiercest bull in the land, like the warrior whom he represents. Though some people unceremoniously pour beer-offerings down the throat of dedicated animals, it is generally claimed that, unlike ordinary animals, they readily drink beer, but the claim is contradicted by the mealie leaves put over the beer to coax the animal to drink. In 1938, when Malegudu, called from the herd to drink the harvest beer, remained immovable, every one was afraid to approach him, but it was considered sufficient to throw the beer over him from a distance, so that by licking himself he might partake of the offering.

778 Shrines, which are to be found generally on the left-hand side of the entrance to the sleeping hut of the chief wife, vary in appearance and contents. A shrine may consist of a small mound of earth, containing the [824] bones of a sacrificial goat; it may be a sacred plant or tree, usually *fitigwani* (*Hypoxis villosa*) or *lesmi* (*Hæmanthus sp.*) and *mutabu* (*Ficus capensis*), a black river stone, a long stick, or even a piece of a certain kind of ant heap (*khithomi*). The queen's own shrine is a mound under which are buried the bones of a goat slaughtered some twenty years ago when it was set up. Mashishimali's shrine contains no bones, but consists of a *fitigwani* lily and a river stone, both visible above ground. Ramatiti has three shrines and one dedicated goat, all of which have arisen out of illness caused by ancestral complaints. Of the first, the shrine of his father, nothing is visible above ground; it consists of a buried piece of ant-heap, used instead of a goat because Ramatiti is not the chief son, who should have the dedicated animal, and a black river stone which keeps the spirit [824] cool and appeased (lying down), as well as the three plant substances *mufira*, *lesago* (*Alipedia sp.?*), *vulwaja*, which are placed in most shrines to make the ancestors 'forget'. The other two are mounds containing the bones and heads of goats, one representing his mother, the other, like the live goat, his mother's brother, his wife's father.

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754 *madabi*.[1] A woman ran away from her husband to live with another.
789 Whenever she was cooking or doing her household duties at her new home, monkeys and other animals appeared at the village till, frightened out of her wits, she ran back to her first husband. *Madabi* are often sent
[845] in connexion with childbirth. Sometimes the sending of *madabi* is looked upon as witchcraft. Malaji changed the sex of Muhale's daughter so as to make the birth difficult each time she was about to bear a child, because the child was his, but the girl no longer loved him. We were not allowed into the hut, but the midwives, whom we knew well, testified to a real change, though probably because certain types of difficult birth are conventionally so explained. Eventually the birth took place, but shortly afterwards the baby was dead. This was considered to be witchcraft, the case was brought to court, and a large fine imposed. Only the doctor who used *madabi* can undo or reverse its power by *hu dabekulla*, but other doctors may, if there has been any injury, heal it with medicines.

789 A practice similar to *madabi*, but differing from it in object is *maɖilebɔ*. At the time of the Swazi raids, Raŋwagu, instead of hiding in the forests, put his faith in *maɖilebɔ* (marvel, wonder). When the enemy came, his village turned into water and they could not find his cattle, though they heard their lowing. Masia, who was wanted by the police during the whole period of our investigation, was able, when chased by them, to disappear even in the open; he would hang like a bat on a plough to look just like a spanner. When eventually he was arrested, he averred, and many people agreed, that it was because he was tired.

Khidɔba is a technique used against thieves and it is both public and legitimate. Some kinds of *khidɔba* are known as a home remedy; some
• [B24] are obtained from doctors. By means of medicine used on *ledzigɛri* grass (*Hyparrhenia Tamba*), one can cause a severe and painful itching in the finger of the thief which may compel him to confess. Likewise, by *hu dɔba*, a stolen goat may be made to cry out in the thief's belly, as happened in a recent case, probably of compulsion neurosis, in which bleating was taken as conclusive proof of his guilt. Another method of *hu dɔba* causes the eyes of the thief to protrude till they fall out on to his stomach; if his mother then cries on seeing him, he may die. *Khidɔba* strikes the thief even when he hides or sells the stolen goods. Besides these measures,
[B24] taken to bring a thief to book after the theft, one may by anticipation protect one's property by means of a piece of *leʃaʃe* rush (*Mariscus sp.*) split at one end to resemble the mouth of a snake and smeared with coloured medicines. When placed at the hut entrance or on the border of your field, it turns into a snake and bars the entry or exit of a thief. A doctor we knew used to have serious talks with his son about the fortune he would make if he knew this medicine, especially in Johannesburg, where theft is common and victims pay high prices. The only recognized cure

[1] The word comes from *dalo* plus *inbi*; *dalo* (well being), is a noun from *hu lala* (to lie down, to be peaceful), and *inbi* means bad. *Dabi* should be calamity, but it is used only in the sense of excessive rain (causing evil). The plural, *madabi*, means misfortune or pain or disease legitimately 'sent'. The verb is *hu dabeka*, legitimately to send misfortune, and its converse, *hu dabekulla*, means to neutralize or remove the effects of *madabi*.

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643 789 and of important councillors who are her closest relatives: when a chief dies the body is left for some days in the hut, so that, when it is rubbed in a certain way (*hu fɔrɔlwa*), the skin easily comes away. Other ingredients are fat of the scaly ant-eater (*khwara*), a royal animal which, when found, has always to be brought alive to the royal village, and parts of the kudu (*thɔlɔ*). The queen's rain-doctor told us that essential ingredients were sea-water, because it foams and froths (*hu pukula*), feathers of the lightning bird, white and black sea shells, and various roots and barks, chief among which is the stem of the *khadi* (*Adenia gumnifera*), a tough forest creeper that contains much water. *Khadi* stems are also used for sprinkling 'cooling' medicines and for tying the bodies of dead people. Whether the queen uses these ingredients, we cannot say. From time to time a black sheep is killed to give strength to the queen's rain medicines; it has to be washed with water which is afterwards poured into the rain pots, but it is said that such a sheep is merely a present-day substitute for a human being, usually a child, whose brains were used. Important district heads related to the chief also have their rain-pots. Every year in about August, at the command of the queen, such a district head collects certain roots and barks, knowledge of which he has received from his father, places them in his rain-pot, mixed with water that has been drawn by girls below the age of puberty, and stirs them up so that rain may be good that year. Rain-pots are great secrets and only after years of friendship were we privileged to see one: it was well hidden in the cleft of a rock and partly buried at the foot of a tree on the upper slopes of a hill where the owner's father had dwelt. The rain-pots of the queen we have not seen, and what regular measures she takes are not known for certain; but, since it is said, when there are good rains, that the queen has firmly laid the foundations (*hu thea*) of the year, it is not unlikely that she also stirs her medicines.

824 634

789 261 Great care has to be taken lest the rain-pots 'weaken' (*hu figchɔla*). They have to be given (*hu lumiswa*, to cause to be bitten) the first green foods (*mutshatsha*) every year, kaffir water melon (*legwadzi*) mixed with other green foods being used for the purpose, and at the royal village no one cooks and eats the new summer relishes before this has been done. On this day possessed people or people who have epilepsy also eat medicine with the firstfruits, but ordinary people do not *luma*, and there are none of the public festivities of a semi-military character associated with the eating of the firstfruits among Swazi and Zulu. It is very important too that the first termites (*dinnfwa*), which appear usually in December, just after the first good rains, should be given to the rain-pots. Termites are closely associated with rain: they always fly out of their nests just after the rain; in a dry year there are very few; and it is believed that sprinkling the antheap with rain medicine (*mufugo*) makes the ants come in great numbers. Termites for the rain-pots may not be gathered by married women or girls over the age of puberty, and in 1937, when some young girls carried the first termites to the queen, she gave the termites to the dogs, refusing to use ants that had been thus defiled. The giving of the first termites to the rain-pots is called *bulane*. An interesting case arose out of this practice in January, 1938, when certain people in Duthudi

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area ate termites before the *bulane* of the head. An inquiry was held by the district head and four men were fined two goats each. They were told that, if their case had come before the queen herself, they would have had to pay a head of cattle. Only the few sub-areas under the immediate jurisdiction of the queen herself send termites to the queen; in other areas they send to their own head, and there is no rule that the queen's own rain-charms should be given before others.

The powers of the queen to make rain are not absolute. The queen can control rain only 'in agreement with her ancestors' who are able, if they wish, to stay her hand just as she herself is able to stay the hands of rain-doctors. There are also certain things that, by causing the rain charms to become 'weak' (*figchila*), have power to stop the rain unless proper measures are taken. It has already been shown how heat is associated with illness and things being wrong. If a person has been burned to death or struck by lightning, he must be buried in a wet place near the river or his grave 'cooled' with special medicine obtained from the chief, lest drought ensues. Similarly, abortions or miscarriages, women dying in pregnancy or childbirth, twins killed at birth, babies dying before cutting their teeth or cutting the upper teeth before the lower, initiates dying in the circumcision lodge—all must be buried in a wet place.

Since an electrical storm often means little or no rain, it is believed that 'sending' lightning to kill one's enemies, a common practice of witches, spoils the country by preventing rain. Hence at a tribal gathering (*khivijo*), held in the spring of 1937–8, the people were told among other things that the chief does not want to see 'lightning of people' (as opposed to natural lightning); any district head hearing of anything like this among his people was to report at once to the queen. A common phenomenon in time of drought is the banking up of heavy rain clouds with all the promise of a soaking rain, only to be dispersed by wind. Anything associated with winds is thus thought to prevent rain. That is why witches, by hanging *lefalaja-maru*—literally, 'disperser of the clouds' (*Asparagus plumosis*)—or an ordinary broom on a branch where it will sway in the air, can disperse the clouds; and any one dying of a coughing disease, such as *dzre* or consumption, must be buried in wet soil or soil that has been sprinkled with *mufugo* medicine. If abortions or people dying of a coughing disease are buried without these precautions, the grave is called *pukudi* (from *hu pukula*, which perhaps is the opposite of *hu fuga*, to blow upon by a cool breeze, to sprinkle with cooling medicine). *Pukudi* contains the conception of wind issuing upwards or hot air quivering above a heated surface. As soon as the vapour-laden air reaches the grave, it stops or dissolves in the wind and it is even believed that the corpse, thrusting up an arm, waves it about to cause the wind that drives away the rain.

How dangerous wind is considered to be in setting at naught the efforts of the queen was well illustrated on November 15th, 1937. On that day, after propitious black clouds had been dispersed by a gale that lifted the thatch off many a hut, it was proclaimed that the following day had to be a holiday. People said, '*Gi khumula*' (it is a 'turning back' before the goal

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girls below the age of puberty are sent to draw water for the *mufugo* which the queen's rain-doctor prepares for the occasion, and after a day or two, when the medicine froths up (*hu pukula*), boys are sent with a horn of *mufugo* and a brush of *khadi* creeper (*Adenia gumnifera*) to every village in the land. First they heat medicine on the fire of the men's courtyard and thereafter on the threshold and hearth of every hut. The ashes are cleared away by an old woman, for so dangerous is the medicine used that any man, woman, or child entering the hut before it has been smeared with dung will *khuma* and be unable to have children. A new fire is kindled in the men's courtyard, whence each woman fetches a brand for her own hut, for it is taboo to kindle a fire from any other. In return for her firebrand, each woman gives the men stamped mealies or groundnuts, which they eat in the *khɔrɔ*. Each married man in turn must give something to the boys who have brought *mufugo*, usually 1*s*. or a fowl (in the old days an arrow or mealies), but often also tobacco or other gifts for, as '*mufugo* does not choose' (*mufugo a u khɛthe*), anything may be given. Each boy must give 1*s*. or a fowl to the keeper of *mufugo*, keeping the rest as a reward for his labours. It is taboo to work in the fields on the day after *mufugo*. In 1927 some boys, too lazy to fetch the medicine, took matters into their own hands and made a mixture of ash and water, which they used in their rounds. They were discovered and made to pay five head of cattle each and the ceremony had to be performed again.

When the divining bones diagnose drought as due to ancestors, steps have to be taken for a sacrifice at an ancestral grave. Any one of the close relatives of the queen can cause drought: sometimes it is the queen's mother Leakhali, buried at Khaḍa; sometimes it is Mugɔdɔ's sister, buried at Mudzinoni; in 1925–6 it was Mulogwane, the queen's brother, who complained that he was buried in the Christian cemetery, instead of in the shade of the forest. A sacrifice for rain will take place only after it has become clear that, in spite of steps taken to *lova* the queen by means of money or dancing, she fails by her ordinary methods to cause the rain to fall.

January, 1938, was hot and dry. Several headmen had been to *lova*, but no rain fell. Important district heads and councillors thus began to 'travel about, having the bones thrown', to discover the cause, while the queen herself also sent messengers to various well-known diviners. The reply came, 'Seek ye a black sheep. Go with it to show your care for the spirits and you shall see that it will rain nicely.' As is so often the case, no indication was given of the cause of their complaint; the suggestion as to the practical measures to be taken and the identity of the troublesome spirits were quite sufficient. The queen, however, remained inactive; it was not for her to take the initiative till her people humbly begged her to do so. On February 11th three of the most important men at the capital approached her, saying, 'People are crying. Help us.' Thereupon she impatiently replied, 'People tire me. The year was well established, but they have "weakened" (*hu figchela*) it. They want me to be troubled.' She implied that she had safeguarded the year, but that the people themselves, by breaking rain taboos and by their evil works and witchcraft, had undermined that safeguard. When the councillors continued